

Priorities for the Future



In the coming years, the National Diabetes Education Program will continue to focus on its goal: to reduce the illness and death of diabetes and its complications.

As new biomedical research on management of diabetes emerges, the National Diabetes Education Program will translate that science into practice and expand its target audiences as warranted. Data from clinical trials and research supported by the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will be promoted and disseminated to the scientific, health professional, and lay public communities to help close the gap in diabetes care.

In the near future, the program will address a variety of emerging issues in diabetes care through information, education, and partnership outreach activities including the following.

Awareness campaigns are being planned to offer social support for people with diabetes, provide healthy eating tips to Hispanics/Latinos to help them control the disease, renew efforts to reach seniors with messages about Medicare's benefits for people with diabetes, and

promote the importance of healthy eating and regular physical activity to American Indian children to help reduce their risk of diabetes.

Heart disease and stroke account for nearly 75 percent of all diabetes-related deaths. A growing body of scientific evidence indicates that aggressive management of blood glucose, lipids, and blood pressure is essential to reduce morbidity and mortality in people with diabetes. NDEP will expand its diabetes control awareness campaign to educate and inform people with diabetes about the link between diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Campaign messages will encourage them to work closely with their health care providers to control the ABCs of diabetes: A1C, blood pressure, and cholesterol. NDEP will work with its Health Care Providers and Minority Work Groups to develop educational materials and clinical practice tools to address this critical component of diabetes care.

Children with diabetes face special challenges controlling their diabetes in school settings. To help children with type 1 or type 2 diabetes, materials will be developed for schools and day care centers to

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educate school personnel on the appropriate management of diabetes in children in the school setting. In addition, the NDEP will develop partnerships with key educational and health care provider organizations and parent groups to enhance and support diabetes management in schools.

To meet the special needs of older Americans with diabetes, the NDEP's newly expanded Older Americans work group will develop activities to address the broader issue of improving diabetes control in people ages 65 and older. Research is planned to gain a better understanding of the problems older Americans face in dealing with diabetes, how to reach the various segments of the population, and how to develop effective partnerships with senior groups.

Another NDEP initiative will be targeted to pharmacists, podiatrists, optometrists, and dentists to heighten their awareness of the importance of blood glucose control in the prevention of complications affecting the feet, eyes, teeth, and gums and to foster collaboration between these health professionals and other health care providers.

Plans are in the offing to promote the team approach to care to the people who make decisions about health care plans. Similarly, the program will offer worksite-

based diabetes control program tools to employers, and the people who purchase health care.

The National Diabetes Education Program will continue to support its Partnership Network with technical assistance tools and training sessions, meetings, and a new interactive web site designed to promote information sharing. NDEP will work to expand its

Partnership Network and involve many additional organizations in its information and education activities.

Finally, the National Diabetes Education Program has developed a plan to collect, evaluate and analyze NDEP-related partner activities and the minority work group process component of the Partnership Network. In addition, plans are being outlined for measuring the National Diabetes Education Program's impact on target audiences and outcomes related to diabetes care.

The National Diabetes Education Program has made its mark as a strong, flexible organization that responds rapidly to public health needs and to the needs of its constituents. The program envisions a promising future that will continue to be shaped by its strong leadership and the many partners who have worked steadfastly to spread the word about the program and the importance of diabetes control.

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